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COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE 1/

Report of the Secretary-General

I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 15 November 1994, the General Assembly adopted, without a vote, resolution 49/13 entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe". By that resolution, the Assembly, acknowledging the increasing contribution of the Organization to the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security through its activities in preventive diplomacy, crisis management, arms control and disarmament and post-crisis stabilizing and rehabilitation measures, welcomed the increased cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and OSCE and requested the Secretary-General to explore with the Chairman-in-Office of the Conference possibilities for further improvement in that regard. The Secretary-General was requested to submit to the Assembly at its fiftieth session a report on the implementation of the resolution.

2. By the same resolution, the General Assembly decided to include in the provisional agenda of its fiftieth session the item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe".

3. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 49/13.

II. MEASURES OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

4. On 26 May 1993, letters were exchanged between the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Chairman-in-Office of the Council of CSCE (see A/48/185,

annexes I and II). By those letters, the signatories accepted the arrangements described in the framework for cooperation and coordination between the two organizations (A/48/185, annex II, appendix).

5. By resolution 48/5 of 22 October 1993, the General Assembly decided to invite CSCE to participate in the sessions and work of the Assembly in the capacity of observer.

6. The observer status of OSCE and the framework agreement referred to in paragraph 4 above constitute the institutional parameters of cooperation between the United Nations and OSCE.

7. As was noted in the previous reports of the Secretary-General on cooperation and coordination with CSCE submitted to the Assembly at its forty-eighth and forty-ninth sessions (A/48/549 and A/49/529), good contacts have been established and maintained between the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Chairman-in-Office of OSCE and their representatives, who meet on a regular basis at United Nations Headquarters. The Secretary-General has been represented at the meetings of the Committee of Senior Officials of OSCE at Prague (now the Senior Council). The Secretary-General also attended and addressed the summit of the heads of State or Government which took place at Budapest on 5 and 6 December 1994.

8. In continuation of the informal understanding that there should be a division of labour between the two organizations, the United Nations has retained the lead in peacemaking efforts in Tajikistan and in Abkhazia, Georgia, while OSCE has had the lead in Nagorny Karabakh, Azerbaijan, the Republic of Moldova and South Ossetia, Georgia. Specific efforts have been made to improve contacts and cooperation in the field, at the negotiating table and between the respective headquarters. These steps have resulted in better coordination with the aim of making better use of the resources of the international community in the interests of the countries being assisted. For example, in the former Yugoslavia, the United Nations has extended logistical and other support to the OSCE mission in Sarajevo and there has been close collaboration between the United Nations and the OSCE mission in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. In Tajikistan, where, as noted above, the United Nations has the lead role with regard to peacemaking and the OSCE mission has primary responsibility for human rights and questions relating to the building of democratic institutions, an understanding has been reached and practical steps taken to assign to OSCE certain protection functions for Tajik returnees in the southern province of Khatlon which were previously carried out by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

9. Regarding the conflict in and around the Nagorny Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, during the past year the Secretary-General was represented at meetings of the OSCE Minsk Group and in September 1995 he dispatched a goodwill mission to the region in support of OSCE efforts. In addition, the two organizations have been in close contact concerning the technical aspects of a possible OSCE peace-keeping mission in the region.

10. The informal process of tripartite consultations which was initiated in 1994 between the Geneva-based United Nations Offices and Programmes, the OSCE

and the Council of Europe has proven to be extremely useful as a forum for the sharing of information and the coordination of action and as a means to avoid duplication. It is an effective tool in establishing new channels of communication and for bridging the differences in institutional cultures. Following the September 1994 meeting in Geneva under the chairmanship of the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, a new round of discussions at Budapest in February 1995 was hosted by the Chairman-in-Office (Hungary) of the OSCE. The next meeting is expected to be held before the end of 1995 at Strasbourg at the invitation of the Council of Europe.

11. The Budapest meeting gave an important impetus to the dialogue between the OSCE and humanitarian organizations. It was agreed that the tripartite process would be strengthened by target-oriented meetings on major humanitarian operations. Two target-oriented meetings have so far taken place, respectively on Chechnya (April 1995) and on the Caucasus and Tajikistan (May 1995). A third such meeting is scheduled for the beginning of November 1995 in order to share information and coordinate humanitarian action in the former Yugoslavia.

12. This supplementary informal process has proven to be informative and effective. It ensure the active participation of OSCE institutions, as well as of the Chairman-in-Office, in a regular dialogue with humanitarian organizations, and thereby assures an essential link between prevention/conflict resolution processes and humanitarian operations. It ensures the regular flow of information between agencies and provides scope for coordinated and complementary action. The process was strengthened further in June 1995 when the OSCE secretariat invited humanitarian agencies to meet all OSCE heads of field missions. Given the emphasis of this process on humanitarian activities, other organizations, such as the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Organization for Migration and the Commission of the European Union, are included in the consultations on the basis of their involvement in the areas under discussion. For the United Nations, the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, the Department of Humanitarian Affairs, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and the Economic Commission for Europe are regularly represented. Other United Nations entities are invited depending on their involvement in the operations under discussion.

13. In sum, 1995 has seen the further consolidation of links between the United Nations and OSCE. This cooperation and coordination will be maintained and enhanced with the aim of making the best possible use of the resources made available by Governments to international organizations to carry out the tasks assigned to them. The avoidance of duplicative or overlapping mandates will facilitate such cooperation and contribute to effective coordination.

Notes

1/ At the Summit of CSCE Heads of State and Government, held at Budapest on 5 and 6 December 1994, it was agreed to change the name of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), as of 1 January 1995 (see A/49/800).